

2/ Following some clippings by earlier post.

March 29, 1967

Dear Mr. Wiggins:

I really do not have much more to add to what cries out from the news stories on Gov. Reagan's attack on the state's mental health programs. Dr. Lowry has certainly not distinguished himself at Mr. Short's hearings. Some of these programs, like the schools for mentally retarded children, have begun to approach bare adequacy; they are really far from sufficient, and there are long waiting lists for all of them.

The day care concept is just beginning to take hold. It stands to reason that 1) inpatient populations should be decreasing, or at least the admission rates decelerating; and 2) the costs per inpatient will go up: we would hope towards infinity, if we could somehow learn how to manage the whole patient load outside the institutions, which is too much to dream about.

What is the most infuriating is to have this blunderbuss attack without careful study-- in fact in the face of ongoing studies.

Mr. Reagan has well-known Presidential ambitions. It might temper him now to know that his political style now will help to measure the confidence we can conceive of putting in his judgment as president/. Certainly, we will need to see much better evidence of cool temper to be able to have any thought of this man at the seat of decisions which affect all of our lives.

More immediately, it is not likely that Regan will back down now, unless he gets some tempering advice from some otherwise sympathetic Republicans on the national ~~scene~~ scene. There is likely to be a continuing struggle over this issue, and his attack on these (and other welfare) programs is likely to escalate if he is not firmly opposed to start with.

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I have talked at some length about this with Dave Hamburg, and he has consulted a number of his colleagues in California. He will be in Washington Friday, and after talking to some people at the Am. Psychiatric Assn. will try to call you for further fill-in or followup/. They will have much more detailed documentation, so far as is currently available, on needs and the pragmatic impact of these cuts.

I do feel quite earnestly that the issue deserves national attention on its own merits, as well as what it tells about a would-be candidate. I also believe you can be quite helpful by bringing it to wider attention.

Sincerely,